

G. Meter.

Meter = the number of accented syllables in each half line.

Stich = a line of poetry.

- Sometimes a half-line is called a stich.

Each half-line is called a hemistich or distich.

-3 accents in each hemistich is termed "3-3 meter".

-Three views regarding meter:

1. View of T. Witton Davies.

"The poetry of the Hebrew Bible is not in the strict sense metrical, though the writers under the influence of strong emotion express themselves rhythmically, producing the phenomena which came later to be codified under metrical rules. Thinking and reasoning and speaking preceded psychology, logic, and grammar, and similarly poetry preceded prosody."

-Man is basically rhythmic. The number of accents was not consciously analyzed or determined. The rules were made after the poetry was written.

-Does he object to the idea that people have objective rules? No, but he wants to avoid the problem that people construct theories about meter and then modify the psalms to make them fit their models.

-Davies opposes the idea of modifying the Biblical text.

-Davies notes that the meter in Hebrew poetry is not that regular. If any single system of meter was followed, it needed to span the time from Moses to the Exile, as we have Psalms from throughout this period.

-Have different authors with different goals.

-Your theory has to allow for time period, goals, authors, and development of poetic styles.

Arguments against a single system of Hebrew meter:

a) The Talmud does not note one.

b) Many varying types are claimed, implying the data is not clear.

2. View of Calmet, Lowth and Carpxov.

"The poetry of the Hebrew Bible as originally written and read must have had metrical rules which the authors were conscious of following, yet, through the corruption of the text and our ignorance of the sounds and accentuation of primitive Hebrew, it is now impossible to ascertain what these metrical rules were."